



Cemetery Commission Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: April 20, 2017, 4:30 pm

Commissioners Present: Rita Church, Allison Curran, Lainey Rappaport, Emma Swift, Donna Waldron

Staff Present: Jesse Bridges, Annie D’Alton

Public Present: Nancy Kirby

Attachments: Attendance list

Mtg. was started at 4:30 by Chair Donna Waldron, who welcomed Nancy Kirby, neighbor to Greenmount Cemetery.

I. Approval of Agenda

A. Lainey Rappaport moved to approve the Agenda; Rita Church seconded; all approved.

II. Approval of Minutes from January 26, 2017 Meeting

A. Emma Swift moved to approve; Rappaport seconded; all approved.

III. Old Business

- A. Cemetery use by organizations charging admission: draft fee statement from Jesse Bridges. Language that is similar to other Parks agreements with organizations that use City-owned space for profit: “Organizers of events hosted at City-owned Cemeteries must obtain permission from the Cemetery Office. Organizers of all non-City-sponsored events that require an admission fee must pay a \$25 Permit Fee, plus a \$5/per participant Impact Fee.”
1. Swift asked if most organizations require an impact fee? Bridges replied yes.
 2. This would not apply to the Friends of Lakeview Cemetery (City-sponsored).
 3. Waldron asked how this would be publicized: This fee statement will be posted on the Cemetery pages of the Parks website, and included on the Cemetery’s Price Sheet.
 4. Swift suggested adding “or solicit donations for their organization” to include those who request a “suggested donation” instead of an admission fee, such as Preservation Burlington. This is distinguished from those who “collect” unsolicited, voluntary donations, such as to Branch Out Burlington.
 5. Calculations indicate that this fee would generate about the same amount of revenue as has been donated in the past by Queen City Ghost Walks, so the amount seems reasonable.
 6. Action taken: Swift moved to accept as edited, Rappaport seconded, all in favor. Final wording = “Organizers of events hosted at City-owned Cemeteries must obtain permission from the Cemetery Office. Organizers of all non-City-sponsored events that require an admission fee or solicit donations for their organization must pay a \$25 Permit Fee, plus a \$5/per participant Impact Fee.” *(At 6.15.17 mtg., Commissioner Church requested that D’Alton send a copy of this new ruling to the Friends of Lakeview Cemetery and Queen City Ghostwalk.)*
- B. Storm water easement drawings are not yet available.



IV. Superintendent's Items

- A. Bridges will walk Lakeview fence-line with representatives from Preservation Burlington and the State Historical Division to obtain feedback on specifications for the replacement of the Lakeview fence along North Avenue, which is proposed in the FY18 budget.
 - 1. Church noted that the gates were donated by a doctor in memory of his wife.
 - 2. Rappaport asked if we should seek donations for the fence replacement. Bridges responded that philanthropists are more interested in supporting efforts to solve the community's homeless and opiate addiction problems than replace cemetery fence.
- B. Waldron asked that Bridges respond to the concerns about access to Lakeview Cemetery that Ed Winant expressed in a letter to Waldron.
 - 1. There is no proposed access to the Cemetery from the south side. There is a gate in the fence for Cemetery staff use.
 - 2. Bridges disagrees with Winant's view that the new gate that allows access to the Cemetery from the bike path will be used by young people who will harm the Cemetery. It's important to recognize that the cemeteries are parks—not the type with swing sets, but open for use by the public. Bike path access to the New North End has not had a negative impact.
 - 3. Bridges notes that the new gate at Greenmount where the fence has been cut many times is more attractive than a damaged fence. Nancy Kirby agreed, and has observed people closing it after coming through. She noted that another gate would be useful near Centennial Field, where people have also been cutting the fence for access through the cemetery. She is willing to donate to help pay for another gate. She agrees with the idea noted before that people are less likely to break rules in areas that are well-cared for and look attractive, because these areas tend to attract more people, so rule-breakers have more risk of being caught. She hopes that increased foot traffic and the attractive appearance of another new gate could help deter people camping in Greenmount—she has called the police for this. Bridges asked Annie D'Alton to ask Jeff Shedd to price a new gate.
 - 4. Kirby reported that the main gate at Greenmount needs to be welded. She closes it at night. She asks people to leave at sunset. Because of the proximity of her property, she is adversely affected by miscreants in Greenmount, and does what she can to discourage unlawful behavior. Bridges asked D'Alton to ask Shedd to consult with Marty Hornick to repair the gate.

V. Commissioner's Items

- A. Signage
 - 1. Rappaport asked what happened to the "open sunrise to sunset" sign at Greenmount. No one present knew. She added that a "no dogs" sign is needed, and reported that Jeff Shedd has noted there is more dog poop this year, so we need to enforce the no dogs rule better. Bridges noted that signs do not seem to help.
- B. Branch Out Burlington tree walk at Lakeview, June 10, 2017
 - 1. Waldron will email BOB that Commission is all in favor of this event, but does not have time to help.
- C. March Library event discussion
 - 1. Rappaport reported that a Comcast worker at her residence told her that there are volunteer sign-up sheets at Comcast.
 - 2. Rappaport noted that there was TV coverage.
- D. May 20, 2017 training in Charlotte



1. Waldron and Diane Leary from Vermont Old Cemetery Association will walk through Greenmount to identify stones to be righted. D'Alton asked if the Commissioners should attempt to contact lot owners. Bridges responded that as long as the stones are not cleaned or repaired, but simply righted, this is not necessary. Kirby asked isn't this work included in Perpetual Care—no, that is for grounds maintenance only.
2. Waldron will find out what supplies will be needed, and when the June work date will be.
3. Leary asked permission to write an article in the VOCA newsletter- Commissioners agreed.
- E. Donna Waldron update
 1. Waldron announced that although she and her husband have many connections in Burlington, they will be moving to New Hampshire to be near their grandchildren. Thus her Commission position will be opening, and a new Chair will be needed. She will be in contact via email if necessary.
 2. Church commended Waldron for all she's done for the Commission.
 3. Bridges thanked Waldron for cultivating the Commission's relationship with Branch Out Burlington.
 4. Church's and Rappaport's terms end in July, and they will reapply. Church noted that she may not be able to attend all meetings, but is happy to serve to share her valuable knowledge of Commission and Cemetery history. Kirby asked if applicants have to be from certain Wards—no, any Burlington resident can apply.

VI. Office Report

- A. Discuss exception to "interment pre-payment not allowed" rule for people donating body to UVM Medical School.
 1. D'Alton explained that the Medical School owns a lot at Greenmount, where they have buried cremains of donated bodies every few years. According to a donor who called the Cemetery Office, after they fill the lot they will not be responsible for interring cremains anymore, but will send the cremains to a designated person. The caller asked if she could buy a lot at Lakeview, and pre-pay for interment, because she does not want to designate anyone to be responsible for her cremains. D'Alton suggests that this would be a nice way for the Cemetery Division to show community support. The only liability would be that if burial fees increase after a pre-payment, the Cemetery would lose the difference in revenue—this would probably not be that significant.
 - ◆ Bridges is in favor.
 - ◆ Swift moved to support; Waldron seconded; all in favor
- B. Church thanked Bridges for his service to the Parks, Recreation & Waterfront Department, and wished him the best at his new job. Bridges has agreed to get the FY18 budget approved by the end of May, 2017. He reports that the Parks Dept. is on better footing financially than when he started work as Director.
 1. Rappaport asked if he will stress the need for D'Alton's job to become full-time. Bridges reported that the projected revenue is higher than the budgeted expenses, so less will be required from the General Fund, which will help to support this.

VII. Adjournment

- A. Next meeting: Thursday, June 15, 2017, 4:30 PM
- B. At 6:00 pm, Allison Curran moved to adjourn; Swift seconded; all in favor.